

Malaysia

Tourism

A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION OF TOURISM MALAYSIA

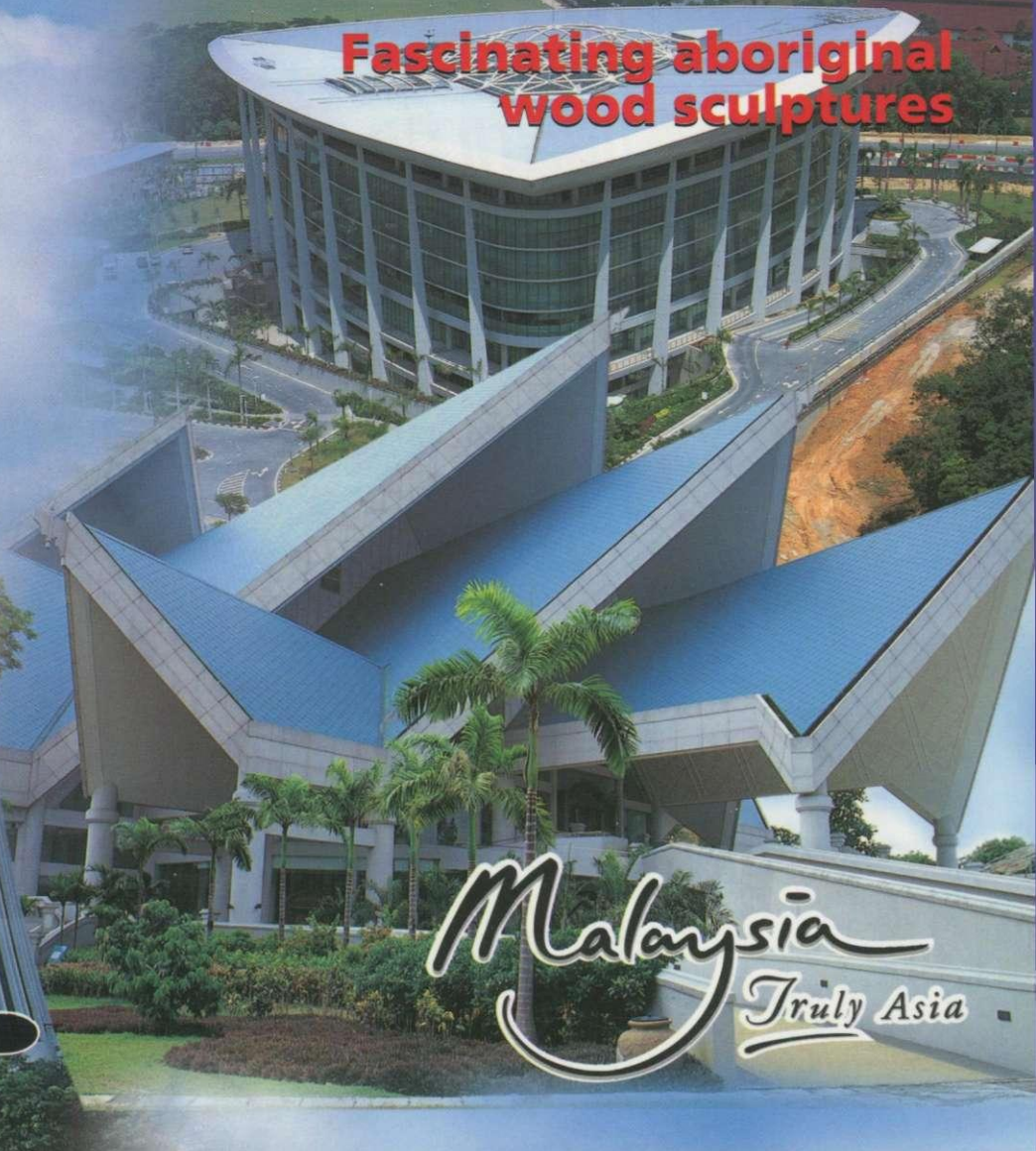
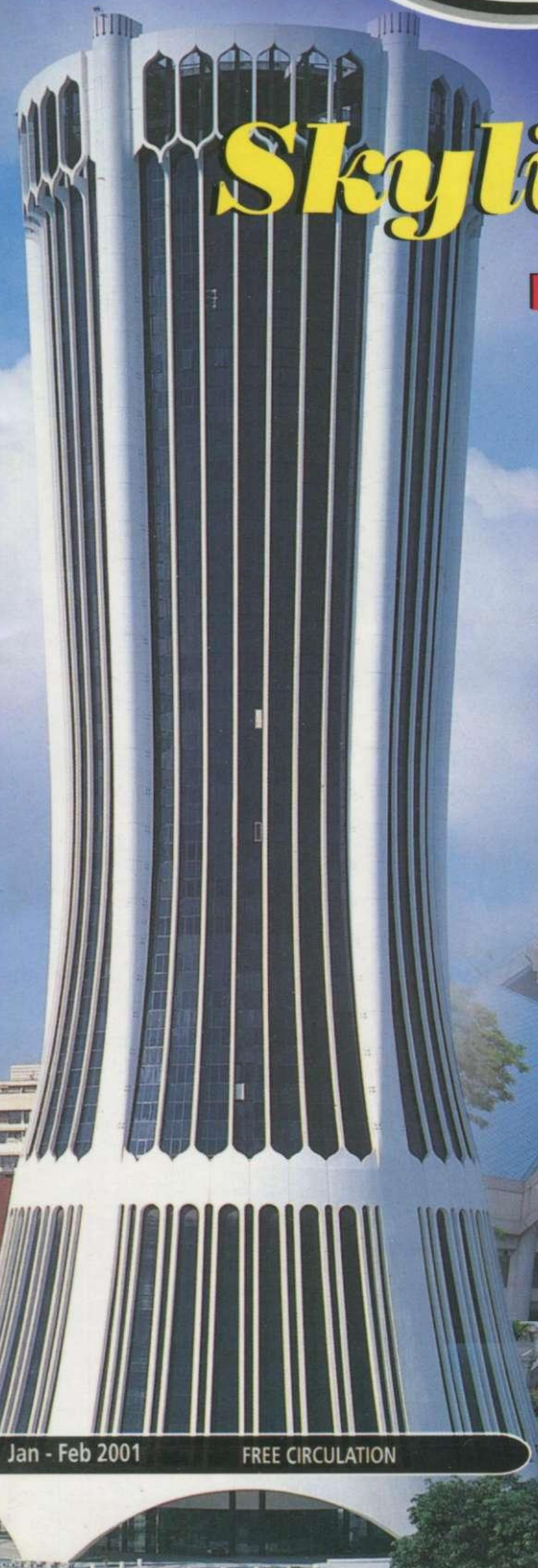
ISSN 0128-1348

Skyline Beauties

Romancing 'silver hair' travellers

**Lure of Sarawak's exotic
rainforest marvels**

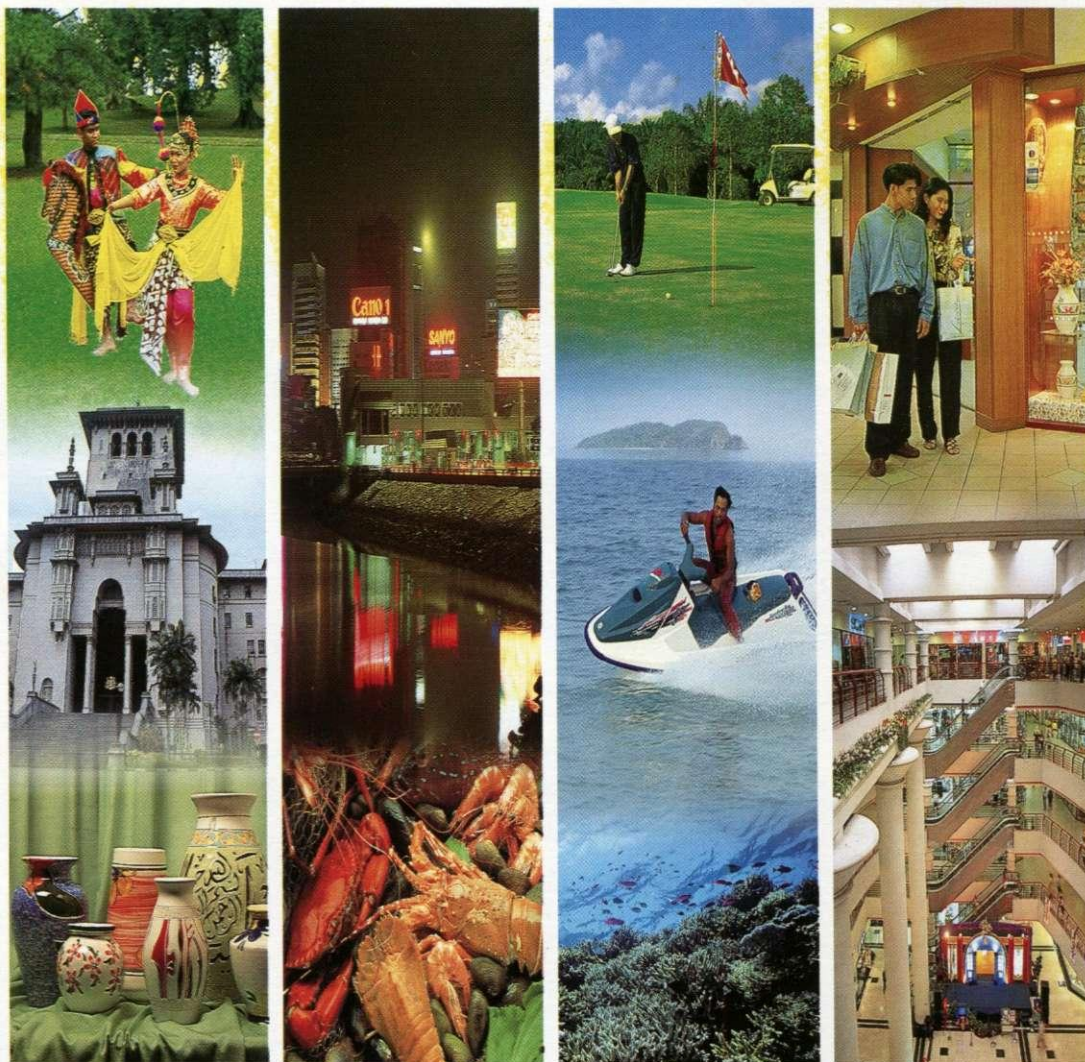
**Fascinating aboriginal
wood sculptures**



Jan - Feb 2001

FREE CIRCULATION

Malaysia
Truly Asia



At the southern tip of Asia lies a precious stone.

***JOHOR,
Malaysia, has it all.***

Johor, the southern gateway to Malaysia, has all to make your holiday an exciting and enjoyable adventure.

Watch the kuda kepong, a dance steeped in mythology. Visit the Sultan Ibrahim Building, the only living Royal Museum and the palace into a time zone of a century of exquisite culture and tradition. Johor's ceramics and handicrafts are some of the most artistic and creative.

Dine at the most exotic places for seafood and the laksa, Johor's popular dish. Kukup, a town famous for its mouth-watering seafood, has restaurants on stilts by the sea.

Bask in the tranquility and the serenity of the countryside, on the casuarina-lined beaches of Desaru or in the crystal clear waters of the islands for jetskiing, scuba diving or even fishing. Or walk through a million years of flora and fauna at the Endau-Rompin National Park.

Then while in Johor Bahru city, stroll through the dozen shopping malls for the best bargains in designer fashion. You may also try your best handicap at the many challenging designer golf courses around the city, and in some major towns, by the beach.

Lots of fond memories to bring home to.



Level 5-4, Johor Tourist Information Centre (JOTIC), No. 2, Jalan Air Molek, 80000 Johor Bahru, Malaysia.
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Malaysia Tourism is published by Tourism Malaysia. Views and opinions expressed in the publication are not necessarily those of the publisher.

ISSN 0128-1348 January/February 2001

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Tourism Malaysia Diary 2001

1 Apr	Autumn River Festival - Perth, Australia
2 - 10 Apr	Borse Turismo di Napoli (BTM) - Napoli, Italy
3 - 6 Apr	PATA Travel Mart - Singapore
6 - 8 Apr	Sunday Mail Escape Expo - Brisbane, Australia
8 - 12 Apr	50th PATA Annual Conference - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
12 - 15 Apr	Outbound Travel Fair (OTF) - Taipei, Taiwan
26 - 29 Apr	Taichung International Leisure - Taichung, Taiwan
19 - 21 May	Getaway Travel Expo - Perth, Australia
25 - 27 May	Asia Diving Expo (ADEX) - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
29 - 31 May	European Incentive, Business Travel & Meeting Exhibition (EIBTM) - Geneva, Switzerland
31 May - 3 Jun	Korea World Travel fair (KOTFA) - Seoul, South Korea
7 - 10 Jun	International Travel & Exhibition (ITE) - Hong Kong
20 - 21 Jun	Meeting & Incentive Show (M&IT) - London, UK

EDITORIAL



The year 2001 and the onset of a brand new third millennium hold a lot of promises and challenges for the Malaysian tourism industry.

Having broken an all-time high of 10.2 million tourist arrivals last year that surpassed the 6.5 million target set in the Seventh Malaysia Plan, we are indeed delighted that our strategic action plans have borne fruits.

In order for us to maintain a steady inflow of tourist arrivals into the country, we need to continue, if not, heighten our efforts to increase the awareness of Malaysia and its many attractions. This year alone, we have lined up 696 fun-filled events that are aimed at enhancing further Malaysia's visibility as a premier tourist destination.

Malaysian festivities such as the Hari Raya, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, Kaamatan and Gawai celebrations will be used to portray the rich cultural heritage of our people in line with the festival, carnival and continuous merriment mood of Malaysia. Indeed, we hope to showcase the colours and flavours of Malaysia through all these activities. Needless to say, we can only achieve this with the full cooperation of everyone especially the private sector.

Malaysia's 20th year of participation in the recently concluded Asean Tourism Forum 2001 (ATF) in Brunei Darussalam bring forth a sense of nostalgia. It was us who took the initiative to organise the first ATF in 1981 at Genting Highlands, which has helped to turn into reality Asean's hope and vision to have a truly meaningful platform to strategically position the region as a desirable tourist destination.

We also take pride that another significant event in the tourism calendar for the region, the 50th PATA Annual Conference 2001, will be hosted by Malaysia in April. The last time we hosted the Conference was in 1986 which was considered as one of the Association's largest and most eventful gathering in the history of PATA. The publicity generated from such events is immeasurable. Let us therefore take advantage of this occasion to highlight all that Malaysia has to offer, in particular our unique selling points.

We are one people, yet so diverse and so unique. The multifaceted side of us makes us so colourful and fascinating. As our tagline goes, *Malaysia - Truly Asia*, let us show that to the world!

Abdullah Jonid
Director-General
Tourism Malaysia

Malaysia
Truly Asia

Discover an incomparable Asian feast for the senses in Malaysia. The unique amalgam of Asia's great cultures – Malay, Chinese, Indian and the many ethnic groups of Sarawak and Sabah – means more exciting sights, sounds, smell and tastes for an unforgettable experience. In friendly Malaysia, even the British, Dutch, Portuguese and Thai have left their cultural, culinary and historical mark. So much of exotic Asia can be found in just one destination – Malaysia! Come and revel in the beauty and hospitality of Malaysia.

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December Mega Sale goes festive

With Christmas, Hari Raya Aidilfitri and New Year's Eve in December and Chinese New Year in January 2001, festivity filled the air as YB Dato' Rafidah Aziz, the Honourable International Trade and Industry Minister, launched Malaysia's December Mega Sale (2 Dec 2000 – 1 Jan 2001) at *Dataran Merdeka* (Merdeka Square) in Kuala Lumpur. Present was YB Dato' Abdul Kadir Hj Sheikh Fadzir, the Honourable Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism.

Following the launch, both Ministers boarded gaily decorated trishaws and led a 100-trishaw convoy to Jalan Tuanku Abdul Rahman, the city's colourful shopping high street. The trishaws had been specially brought up from Malacca.

A simultaneous launch took place in Malacca (Mahkota Parade Shopping Complex) and Langkawi (Langkawi Fair Shopping Complex). In Sarawak, Tourism Malaysia and the Sarawak Tourism Board organised a total of 78 side events in Kuching, Sibul and Miri including Ramadan Food Fair, Christmas carolling and stage shows during the month-long mega sale.



Wooing China's tour market

YB Dato' Dr Ng Yen Yen, the Honourable Deputy Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism led the Malaysian delegation to the China International Travel Mart 2000 (CITM) and the Shanghai Tourism Festival. Participants in Tourism Malaysia's booth at CITM included Malaysia Airlines, Sarawak Tourism Board, Sabah Tourism Promotion Corporation, 10 travel agencies and four hotels.

For the Shanghai Tourism Festival, Tourism Malaysia participated in the Grand Float Parade and staged cultural performances in several high pedestrian venues such as the Shanghai Railway Station Square, the Oriental Pearl Tower Square, the New World City Shopping Complex and the Rainbow Park.

The Honourable Deputy Minister also met with key tour operators in Shanghai and Hangzhou including China International Service, China International Travel Service and China Youth Travel Service, as well as the media.



New products at *WTM 2000*

Malaysia staged a strong show at the World Travel Mart (WTM) 2000 in London, its 17th appearance, with 67 organisations participating and offering new creative packages and products aimed at making the country the most preferred holiday destination in Asia. Tourism Malaysia Director-General Abdullah Jonid led the delegation of Malaysian sellers comprising the state governments of Kedah, Johor and Malacca, MAH (Malaysian Association of Hotels), MAHO (Malaysian Association of Hotel Owners), MATTA (Malaysian Association of Tour & Travel Agents), travel agencies and tourism-related organisations.

The batik and wayang kulit demonstrators at the booth and cultural dancers in different traditional ethnic costumes helped to draw attention to Malaysia Pavilion. Three lucky draws were held with air tickets sponsored by Malaysia Airlines as prizes.

At the Malaysian Travel Awards Dinner, trophies for several travel categories were presented in recognition of British travel industry efforts to promote Malaysia. The winners were Fiona McWilliam of The Sunday Times (National Travel Writer of the Year), Steve Hendry of Edinburgh Evening News (Regional Travel Writer of the Year), Lynton Cooper Travel (Best Incentive Programme to Malaysia), Gold Medal (Best New Tour Programme) and Saga Holidays (Overall Commitment to Promoting Malaysia).

Page & Moy Leicester and Thomas Cook – Coningsbey Road Peterborough won the two new awards of Best Travel Agent (Independent) and Best Travel Agent (Multiple) respectively.



Malaysia on Dutch TV



Holland's Veronica Television will be featuring Malaysia in its *Go Travel* programme. Targeted at those aged 20 – 45 who love adventurous and active holidays, *Go Travel* provides information about the destination, handy tips, route descriptions and prices.

The film crew was in Penang and Langkawi in late Nov 2000 to capture the islands' attractions. Penang's attractions included mosques, an Indian temple, Kek Lok Si Temple, the Butterfly Farm, Balik Pulau Malay village, padi fields, Georgetown and the beach. In Langkawi, the crew shot the tourist attractions of Kuah Town and the island such as Dataran Lang, Makam Mahsuri and Oriental Village. They also shot a mangrove swamp, bats caves, the beach and sailing to Dayang Bunting.

ENTICING India's incentives

Tourism Malaysia participated in the Conferences, Conventions & Incentives Expo 2000 held in Mumbai in late 2000, the first exhibition on conferencing and allied segments organised in the country. Mumbai is the financial and commercial capital of India. The Malaysia booth attracted a steady stream of enquirers comprising hoteliers, tour operators, business travellers and the general public.



India is a major contributor of tourist arrivals to Peninsular Malaysia. From January - October 2000, the India market showed the highest growth of all the major markets at 212.1%, or 111,863 tourist arrivals compared to 35,843 for the same period in 1999.

Malaysia Nite at World Dental Congress



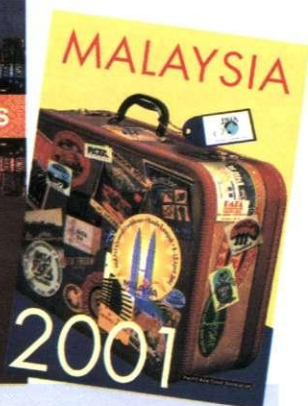
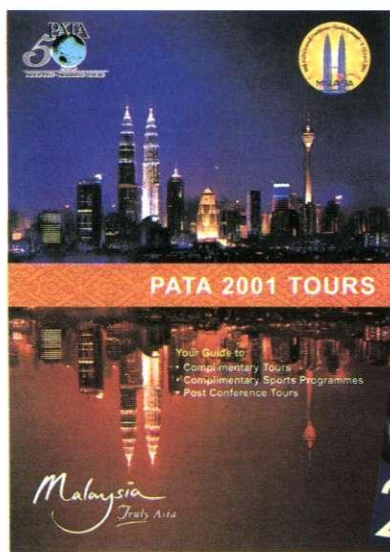
Over 300 delegates to the FDI World Dental Congress 2000 in Paris attended 'Malaysia Night', an event to promote FDI World Dental Congress 2001 to be held in Kuala Lumpur from 27 Sep – 1 Oct. The preview of Malaysia included a colourful cultural performance and the video presentation of *Malaysia - Truly Asia*.

Roadshow visits 4 Indon cities

Tourism Malaysia's roadshow to Indonesia in late 2000 visited four cities – Jakarta, Bandung, Surabaya and Yogyakarta. The focus of this roadshow was on health and education tourism as well as Malaysia's diversified tourism products especially theme parks. Joining the roadshow were seven private organisations comprising travel agents, a hotel, an international school and *Kumpulan Perubatan Johor* (Johor Medical Group).

In each city, the seminar and travel mart for the trade, as well as the consumer exhibition held in a leading shopping complex, received enthusiastic response.





Registration

Fax / mail application to :

"PAC 2001"28th Floor, Unit B1 Siam Tower, 989 Rama 1 Road,
Pathumwan, Bangkok 10330, Thailand.Tel : (66-2)-658-2000 Fax : (66-2)-658-2013/2010
or USA Fax : (1-509)-356-3824 or (1-415)-986-3458E-mail : conference@pata.th.com.Website : <http://www.pata.org>

Celebrate PATA's 50th Anniversary in Malaysia! Plus Golden Jubilee Specials!

Tourism Malaysia invites all Malaysian PATA and PATA Chapter members to join in the golden jubilee celebration of PATA in Kuala Lumpur from 8 -12 April 2001.

Participants will be able to enjoy exclusive anniversary activities and benefit from quality educational sessions. There are complimentary day excursions to Putrajaya, the country's new administrative capital, Kuala Lumpur's heritage sites and city charms and the Malaysian Fashion Extravaganza. The post-conference tours are to Penang, Langkawi, Redang Marine Park, Pangkor Island, Gua (Cave) Tempurung (in Perak State), Sabah, Sarawak, Taman Negara, Malacca, Johor Bahru, Shah Alam and Port Dickson.

Due to limited places, interested participants are reminded to sign up early for the 50th PATA Bowling Tournament and the 50th PATA Anniversary Golf Challenge, which offers a hole-in-one prize of a vintage roadster TD2000 worth RM180,000. Both events are complimentary.

Registration fees for PATA members and spouses have been revised to USD700 and USD365 respectively. In addition, Malaysian registrants receive a 5% discount on the member rates.

MALAYSIA at IT&ME 2000

Visitors to Malaysia Booth at IT&ME 2000 in Chicago, USA, (10-12 Oct), one of the most important MICE shows in America, were able to have a preview of *Malaysia - Truly Asia* and a feel of the tropical rainforest. On hand to provide information on the cultural diversity and other aspects of Malaysia was Tourism Malaysia's Director-General Abdullah Jonid, who led the Malaysian delegation comprising the Malacca State government, Sarawak Tourism Board, Malaysia Airlines and 10 tourism-related organisations.

Tourism Malaysia also organised several events for the trade, including a cocktail reception in Chicago, seminars/presentations in Minneapolis, New York and Los Angeles for MICE agents and the PATA 2001 Malaysia Reception in San Diego.

Tourist arrivals from USA increased to 155,820 for the period January - October 2000, compared to 65,321 for the same period last year, a remarkable growth of 138.5%.



Kinabalu and Mulu made World Heritage Site

Kinabalu National Park in Sabah State, home to Mount Kinabalu, Southeast Asia's highest mountain, and Gunung Mulu National Park in Sarawak State, have been declared World Heritage Sites by the World Heritage Committee at its 24th annual session.

The 75,370-hectare Kinabalu Park, one of the state's six National Parks, has a variety of vegetation, ranging from tropical rainforest to sub-alpine around the summit area. There is an enormous wealth of flora and fauna, including over 1,000 species of orchids, 600 species of ferns, 850 types of butterflies, 90 species of lowland mammals, 22 montane mammals, 326 bird species and 50 toad and frog species.

The 4,095m Mt. Kinabalu is the venue for the annual international climbathon. Also in the park is the Poring Hot Springs, a perfect balm for aching muscles and tired feet after climbing the mountain.

Housing the world's largest underground chamber, the Sarawak Chamber, the 52,866-hectare Gunung Mulu National Park is dominated by the sandstone massif of the 2,376m Mulu Mountain. The largest of the state's ten parks is immensely rich in flora and fauna with 2,000 flowering species identified and an estimated 20,000 animal species comprising mainly insects, and about 60 mammal and 262 bird species.

Information: Sabah Tourism Promotion Corporation re Kinabalu Park

Tel : (60-88)-212-121 Fax : (60-88)-212-075 E-mail : sabah@po.jaring.my Website : www.jaring.my/sabah

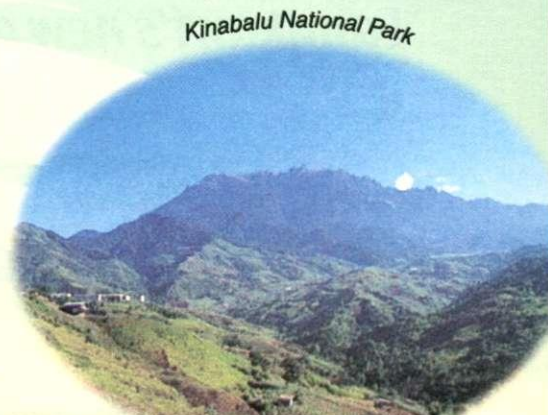
Park accommodation: Kinabalu Gold Resort Tel : (60-88)-243-629 Fax : (60-88)-242-861

Information: Sarawak Tourism Board re Gunung Mulu National Park

Tel : (60-82)-423-600 Fax : (60-82)-416-700 E-mail : sarawak@po.jaring.my Website : www.sarawaktourism.com

Park accommodation: National Parks and Wildlife Booking Office / Sarawak Information Centre, Kuching

Tel : (60-82)-248-088 Fax : (60-82)-256-301



Kinabalu National Park



Mulu National Park

Tekam's agro-attractions beckon

Try your hand at harvesting the oil palm fruit bunches, tapping rubber or picking cocoa pods, coffee beans and colourful tropical fruit at Malaysia's largest agro-resort! Lying on the fringe of Taman Negara, Malaysia's largest and earliest National Park, Tekam Plantation Resort (near Jerantut) in Pahang State offers a taste of life on the plantation mixed with some adventure.

Visitors can go on plantation and orchard tours, fishing, canoeing, boating, river rafting or a trip to Taman Negara. The adventure tour covers the spectacular rock formations and the wide variety of life forms in the historic Kota Gelanggi cave system. The wide range of recreational facilities include a beautiful landscaped 9-hole golf course, a swimming pool, badminton hall, tennis court, soccer pitch, jogging track, table tennis, volleyball and sepak takraw. There are also fishing ponds teeming with fish.

Tekam Plantation Resort has 60 chalets, superior/deluxe/VIP/family rooms, and two bungalows, all with air-conditioning, TV and hot shower. Seminar facilities are available.

Information: Felda Resorts Tel : (60-3)-2698-7772 Fax : (60-3)-2693-5104 E-mail : fasresorts@felda.net.my



Langkawi's new duty free shopping attraction

Set against the stunning lush mountain backdrop, the Oriental Village in Langkawi Island's Burau Bay provides visitors a new duty-free shopping, cultural, dining and entertainment experience. Placed around a central lake are 26 individually styled shops that are expected to offer over 10,000 product lines from Malaysia and around the world, including international branded goods.

The wide range of products encompasses liquor, wine, cigarettes, confectionery and fine foods, gifts, electronics, luggage, handbags and backpacks. Also available are fashion for women, men and children, resortwear, costume jewellery, sports goods, cosmetics, fragrances, watches, pens, sunglasses, cameras and accessories.

Restaurants offering Malay, Chinese and Thai cuisine; a food court serving Malaysian specialties, and an inn help to complete the village concept. Cultural shows and street



entertainment are being introduced in phases. Oriental Village is open daily from 10am - 10pm. Langkawi is a duty-free island with several 5-star hotels and luxurious resorts, an international airport, excellent beaches and numerous tourist attractions.

Information: Oriental Village, Teluk Burau, 07000 Langkawi Tel : (60-4)-959-1606 Fax : (60-4)-959-1607

Asia Pacific Auction Centre starts

The newly-opened Asia Pacific Auction Centre (APAC) in Subang, Selangor offers the infrastructure for the auction of all types of items from aircraft to heavy equipment, livestock and paintings. It provides integrated services for the convenience of buyers and sellers including evaluation, renovation, management and promotion for stocks to be auctioned. The prestigious auction house is equipped with a highly developed IT system for absentee bidding and offers secure storage for purchased goods. Other facilities include a business centre, bureau de change, travel agent, VIP lounge, clinic and catering outlets.

APAC will be linked to the National Exhibition and Convention Centre (NECC), now under construction at the site of the former Terminal 1 of the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport in Subang. It is about 20 minutes drive from Kuala Lumpur and 45 minutes from the KLIA (Kuala Lumpur International Airport). There are international-class hotels nearby including Sheraton Subang, Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel, Crystal Crown and Hilton Petaling Jaya.

Information: APAC, Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, 47200 Subang Tel : (60-3)-745-8600 Fax : (60-3)-745-6260
E-mail : info@apac.com.my Website : www.apac.com.my



Hilton Seremban soft-opens

Located in the Lake Gardens of Seremban (capital of Negeri Sembilan State), the 345-room Hilton Seremban is about 30 minutes drive from the KL International Airport (KLIA). All rooms are equipped with ISDN dual-line telephone and data port for broadband high speed internet access and voice mail messaging service. Only 199 rooms are operational during the hotel's soft opening. The hotel, which will be fully operational in 2001, has five F&B outlets including Asiatique for all-day dining, Han Pi Yuen Chinese restaurant and Anjung Lounge.



Reservations:

Tel : (60-6)-766-6666 Fax : (60-6)-766-6000

E-mail : info_seremban@hilton.com

Website : www.hilton.com

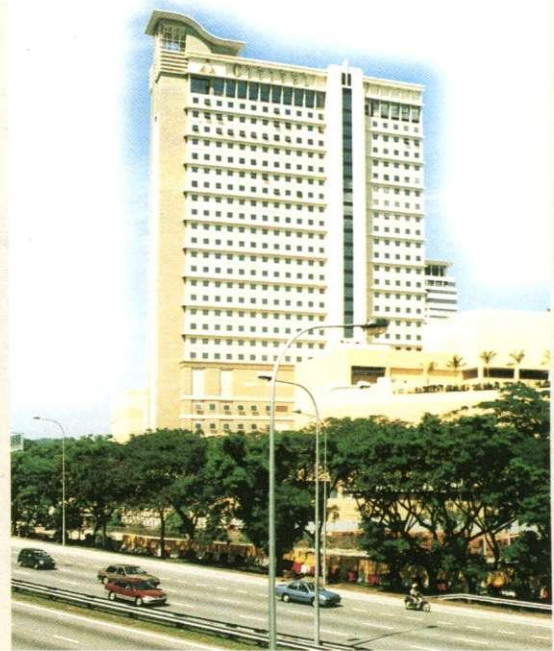
Cititel in KL's Mid Valley

Cititel, a 629-room business hotel adjoining the Mid Valley Megamall in Kuala Lumpur, Asia's largest shopping, entertainment and dining centre, is now open. Room amenities include satellite TV, in-house movies, coffee / tea-making facility, in-room safe and data port connection. The F&B outlets are Citi Café for Asian and Western cuisine and Citi Lounge. The Pinnacle Lounge is available for the use of deluxe room guests and there is a business centre. The hotel has three function rooms and a boardroom that can accommodate from 50 to 150 persons in theatre-style seating.

Mid Valley Megamall lies between Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya, beside the Federal Highway, and has good access to highways leading to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA), about 60km away.

Reservations: Tel: (60-3)-2283-6668 Fax: (60-3)-2283-5551

E-mail: resvnlul@cititelhotel.com Website: www.cititelhotel.com



Meeting room with beach view

The Penang Mutiara Beach Resort, located in Teluk Bahang, has opened The Catch, a new meeting venue on the beachfront that affords views of the blue sea, swaying palms and a beautiful landscaped garden. An extension of the Mutiara Ballroom, The Catch comprises three meeting rooms named after seashells – Iruis, Limidae and Mitridae – and breakout rooms.

Limidae, the largest room, can accommodate 210 persons for a cocktail reception while the breakout rooms can take from 16 – 48 persons. These meeting rooms are provided with a range of equipment such as LCD projectors and multi-system TV monitors. The Mutiara Ballroom and



the five Captain rooms have also been newly refurbished.

Information: Tel: (60-4)-885-2828

Fax: (60-4)-885-2829 E-mail: pmr@po.jaring.my

Website: www.penang-mutiara.com.my

Day Train for KL-Kelantan

The newly launched daily Express Kenali train service provides a direct day service between Kuala Lumpur and Tumpat near the state capital of Kota Bharu in Kelantan State. The 9:15am train from Kuala Lumpur arrives in Tumpat about 10:10pm while the 8:25am train from Tumpat arrives in Kuala Lumpur about 8:58pm. Stops enroute are Kajang, Seremban, Tampin, Gemas, Bahau, Mentakab, Jerantut, Kuala Lipis – the stop for Taman Negara, Malaysia's largest National Park, Gua Musang, Dabong, Kuala Krai, Tanah Merah and Wakaf Baru.

The track cuts through the heart of Peninsular Malaysia, presenting vistas of lush rainforest and picturesque villages and small towns along the way. The adult fare for first, second and third class coaches from Kuala Lumpur to Tumpat are RM84, RM39 and RM29 respectively.

Information: Tel: (60-3)-2273-8000 Fax: (60-3)-2273-6527

E-mail: passenger@ktmb.com.my Website: <http://www.ktmb.com.my>



Romancing 'silver hair' travellers



At beach resorts, city hotels or tourist attractions in Malaysia, 'silver hair' visitors – women and men who are well into their middle-age or have retired mingle among other younger travellers. Higher incomes, a better lifestyle and affordable airfares enable these senior travellers to globetrot even further now that they have the time and the means to do so. Although this market may be more particular about good service and facilities at the places they visit or stay, satisfied guests tend to be repeat guests.

A number of hotels and resorts in Malaysia are aware of the importance of this group of discerning travellers, and are actively seeking out senior travellers. "The 'silver hair' market is a valuable target market for Sutera Harbour Resort," says Jeannie Chin, Vice President, Sales & Marketing. "With almost 1,000 rooms, a golf course, a marina, 15 food & beverage outlets, a spa and extensive recreational facilities at a 384-acre resort complex in the heart of Kota Kinabalu, we are able to appeal to those who prefer some luxury and yet be in exotic Borneo."

Sutera Harbour Resort, which introduced its 'silver hair' programme in late 1999, is currently working with Saga

Holidays of UK, a leading Far East tours seller, as well as tapping other regions including Malaysia, to attract the senior travellers. Length of stay of FIT 'silver hair' travellers from the UK range from 7 to 21 nights, with some staying longer, according to Chin.

All Malaysian and foreign senior travellers aged 50 onwards are eligible to receive a generous host of benefits at Sutera Harbour Resort. There is a permanent exclusive lounge with TV, books, magazines, newspapers, and a bar overlooking the pool area for them.

They get a complimentary welcome drink and cocktail, hosted dinner on the day of arrival and hosted farewell theme dinner on the final night of stay.



Berjaya Tioman Resort



Sunway Lagoon Resort

Other benefits include 15% discount on incidental expenses upon check-out, a dine-around dinner voucher worth RM35.00 per person, complimentary city shuttle service, complimentary use of recreational facilities (except for golf and bowling), and a two-for-the-price-of-one ticket for a nostalgic train ride on the North Borneo Railway, pulled by a "Vulcan" steam engine.

The Sunway Lagoon Resort in Petaling Jaya sees "tremendous potential in the 'silver hair' market," says Farizal Datuk Jaafar, Director of Communications. "The hotel has the facilities to cater to the needs of 'silver hair' guests and hotel staff is trained to provide special care and attention to these guests."

Malaysian and foreign 'silver hair' guests aged 50 and above are offered impressive privileges including priority check-in, express check-out, a welcome drink, a VIP fruit basket, chocolates and a bottle of red wine. They also

get a suite upgrade and a tour of the hotel facilities. Advance booking is required. The 'silver hair' programme of privileges was introduced in January 1999.

"Our 'silver hair' guests are mostly FITs from Australia, UK and Germany who check-in at Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel as a stopover destination before proceeding to other "resort" destinations like Langkawi, Penang, Sarawak or even Sabah," notes Farizal. Average length of stay is 3 to 4 days.

At Berjaya resorts on Tioman, Redang and Langkawi islands, 'silver hair' Malaysian and foreign guests aged 50 and above are welcomed with a complimentary fruit basket. As Berjaya Tioman and Berjaya Redang Resorts are in marine parks, the 'silver age' guests also get a 30-minute complimentary ride in the glass-bottom boat to view the fascinating marine life. The resorts in Redang and Langkawi offer a complimentary afternoon tea for their 'silver age' guests.

Paul Cheah, General Manager of Berjaya Tioman Beach Resort & Suites adds, "We treat every guest with utmost attention. For our "silver hair" guests", further detail to attention is given by our Guest Services Officers to ensure they have a pleasant stay." Senior guests at the property are mainly European FITs who



Berjaya Langkawi Resort



Sutera Harbour Resort

stay on average 8 days.

As a corporate policy, all Equatorial hotels offer a Senior Citizen's Rate of 50% discount on rack rates for seniors 60 years and above, subject to advance reservations and room availability. The 'silver hair' market contributed 7,200 room nights in 2000 to the Penang Mutiara Beach Resort, and is considered a "very important market and with significant spending power". The hotel is currently looking at attracting this segment from Japan and the United Kingdom.

Cuti-Cuti Malaysia senior citizen packages

Under the *Cuti-Cuti Malaysia* programme initiated by Tourism Malaysia to encourage Malaysians to holiday in the country and to regard planned holidays as helping to enhance the quality of life, special packages are available for senior citizens aged 55 and above. Air Asia has appointed a consortium of travel agents to market 3 day / 2 night holiday packages at the destinations it flies to, namely, Langkawi, Kuching, Kota Kinabalu and Labuan.

"These are essentially free-and-easy packages that include accommodation, return airticket, daily breakfast, return airport-hotel transfer and a city tour in Kuching, Kota Kinabalu and Labuan. Participants who want a more 'active' holiday can take up optional tours such as the Sarawak Cultural Village for Kuching visitors, and island hopping for Langkawi visitors," says Haji Mohd. Suhaimi bin Ahmad, General Manager of Mercantile Travel and chairman of the Air Asia select consortium marketing the Air Asia senior citizen tour packages.

Haji Mohd. Suhaimi describes the pricing of these packages as "affordable for Malaysians to travel to these places". Non-Malaysians can purchase these package tours from participating travel agents.

Discounted air and rail tickets

Malaysian travellers aged 55 and above can get Malaysia Airlines tickets at half fare but bookings must be made a week in advance. On Transmile flights, return airfares to Kuching and Kota Kinabalu are RM309 and RM479 respectively, compared to the non-discounted fares of RM359 and RM559. KTM, the local rail network, offers half fare for Malaysian passengers aged 50 and above. ■

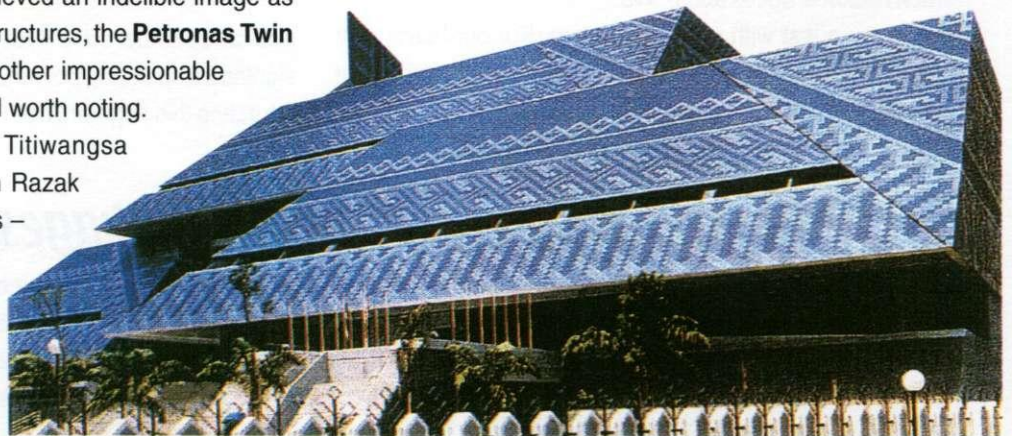
Skyline Beauties

Buildings old and new can serve as prominent city landmarks and tourist attractions in their own right. Culture has lent inspiration for the design of some structures while others display outstanding aesthetics and environmental treatment, as highlighted in this quick tour of some of the newer buildings in and around Kuala Lumpur.

The image, character and personality of a place are formed not only by its culture and inhabitants, but also by its buildings, many would agree. Some buildings are universally acclaimed and a few can be controversial, but there is no denying they help to stamp an identity on their home cities, making these places more instantly recognisable on the world map.

As the hub of the country, Kuala Lumpur is home to a large number of significant and attractive institutional and commercial buildings. Interesting and attractive components of the city skyline, these buildings also mark periods of economic and social development and growth in the country. Some of these buildings stand out as showcases of technological advances, climate and environmental treatment, as well as architectural interpretations of local culture. Kuala Lumpur has achieved an indelible image as the home of the world's tallest structures, the **Petronas Twin Towers**, but there are several other impressionable buildings in the city and beyond worth noting.

Located near the Lake Titiwangsa recreational area off Jalan Tun Razak is a trio of institutional buildings – the National Library, the *Istana Budaya* (National Theatre) and the National Art Gallery – whose architects have looked to cultural motifs for inspiration.



National Library

National Library (Jalan Tun Razak)

The *tengkolok*, the traditional Malay headgear artistically folded from a piece of *songket* cloth, provided the inspiration for the design of the National Library. Unique to the country and dating back to the Malacca Sultanate, the *tengkolok* projects the wearer's social standing.

The low rise National Library is a grouping of three blocks huddled around a courtyard. Symbolically, the three blocks represent the three main functions of a library, that is, to provide education, satisfy the quest for knowledge and cultivate the reading habit, as well as the harmony of the three main races of Malaysia – Malay, Chinese and Indian. The composition projects the building prominently from the main road and allows easy access. At the same time,

exposed angular lines and intricacies arouse the public's curiosity about the contents of the structure.

The use of roof slates in three colours allows the creation of the intricate *songket* motifs. Blue is the official colour of the library, representing the universe and the sea, and signifying the quest for knowledge. The rooftop, (representing the *tanjak* (the apex) of the *tengkolok*), culminates in a glass trapezoidal form that brings in filtered daylight while completing the *tengkolok* effect. Internally, this creates the effect of endowment of knowledge from *Allah* to mankind with the first *Quranic* verse - *Iqra*, meaning 'read'.

The two main blocks share an atrium and have staggered floors, which give the effect of presenting the whole library the minute one steps in and allowing for simultaneous

interaction. This arrangement also encourages the curiosity of the reader to explore the contents of the library.

Istana Budaya (Jalan Tun Razak)

Covering a floor space of 21,000 square metres, the *Istana Budaya* is the first theatre in Asia with sophisticated stage mechanism, putting it on par with international theatres such as the Royal Albert Hall in London. It can accommodate 1,469 people in the main floor stalls, grand circle, upper circle and royal boxes. There are 30 dressing rooms (with shower and toilet), a ballet studio, a costume studio and an office for touring theatre companies.

Istana Budaya



The design of *Istana Budaya* is based on various aspects of Malay culture. The base of the theatre takes the form of a floating *wau bulan*, the traditional Malay kite. The shape of the building portrays the *sirih junjung*, a multi-tier arrangement of *sirih* or betelnut leaves which is often used as a symbolic piece for Malay weddings, festivities and welcoming ceremonies.

The layout of the building follows the pattern of a typical Malay house or *rumah Melayu* which generally has three major sections. The theatre lobby is the equivalent of the *serambi* or verandah. The auditorium represents the *rumah ibu* or main house and the stage and rehearsal hall make up the *rumah dapur* or kitchen.

The staircases leading to the grand entrance depict the entrance staircase of a traditional Malay house in Malacca. The Royal Boxes are designed after the large and spacious windows of a Malay house while the grand entrance replicates the *Balairong Seri* or the hall in Malay palaces. The design of the theatre lobby on the third floor takes the shape of the *rebana ubi*, a traditional Malay drum. Carved floral and leaf motifs decorate the wooden main doors.

National Art Gallery (Jalan Tun Razak)

A sculptural and monumental landmark with its sharp edges silhouetted against the sky, the National Art Gallery appears to be a sculpted block hovering in the air. Adjacent to the National Theatre, the National Art Gallery is stretched along Jalan Temerloh and its main façade is oriented towards Jalan Tun Razak to show maximum frontage to passers-by. Designed to be multi-faceted, the gallery is aesthetically

pleasing on all sides. Aluminium composite panels, tinted reflective glass and stone are the materials on the exterior.

The basic building form is derived from the vernacular roof design to reflect the national identity and is further stylised into a truncated block. An 'A' shape roof straddles the block in order to break the monotony of a monolithic block and introduce a light-filled atrium space internally.

The image of the gallery is further dramatised by conjuring a 'floating roof' concept. With the use of extreme cantilevers soaring out into space and with tremendous daring overhangs, the monolithic block appears to float in the air. The juxtaposition of solid and glass, and the dramatic interplay of light, shadow, mass and space are intended to accentuate the 'floating roof' concept.

The main entrance to the gallery is located below the 'A' shape roof. An exterior ramp leads into a light-filled atrium where a circular ramp then leads to various levels of the gallery. The atrium also serves as a sculpture garden and an exhibition area for kinetic art and large tapestry works.

With the circular ramp, visitors can view the artworks from various levels, angles and distances. The multiple vistas and cross-references heighten the viewing pleasure and help alleviate the fatigue one experiences in a large gallery. Gallery spaces flanking the circular ramp serve as exhibition areas for more intimate and contemplative viewing.

National Art Gallery



Tabung Haji Building (Jalan Tun Razak)

Inspired by the sculpted shapes of traditional Islamic architecture, the waisted 'black and white' *Tabung Haji* Building near the Jalan Tun Razak / Jalan Ampang intersection stands out for its distinctiveness and proclamation of cultural heritage. The building architect

believes that as long as form does not obstruct function, there is every reason to explore new solutions. A round structure is not more expensive than square one if suitable construction techniques are available. Built in the late 1970s when the required construction system was available, *Tabung Haji* Building is recognised as a product of its time that is unlikely to be repeated in Malaysia or anywhere in the world.

Compared with other buildings completed about the same time, the *Tabung*

Haji Building was considerably cheaper to construct per unit area and the circular layout has proven extremely functional, particularly the spiral ramp carpark. By designing the core on a circular plan as well, space utilisation was maximised and the 'doughnut' arrangement minimises walking distance from any part of the floor to the core services.

Tabung Haji Building was the pioneer in pre-casting complex curves, because no two floors had formwork that was the same. On-site pre-casting was the prescribed structural system. All dimensions and specifications were computed manually as the detailing for this design preceded the architect's acquisition of a sophisticated graphic computer system.

The design of *Tabung Haji* Building invites the public in without a feeling of impediment. The tower is set back on the site behind a sloping, landscaped forecourt that has no walls or barriers, the only feature being the public *surau* (Muslim chapel). The whole forecourt is now a popular venue for Friday prayers.



Tabung Haji Building



Central Plaza

Central Plaza (Jalan Sultan Ismail)

Situated near the Jalan Sultan Ismail/Jalan Bukit Bintang intersection, the 27-storey Central Plaza is a 'wafer-thin' tall building with a high-tech look provided by the greenish laminated float glass and solid aluminum cladding. The typical office floor is column free and to enable this, structural cross-bracing is provided at the end columns of the east and west façades. Vertical planting steps up diagonally along the north face up to the pool-side at the top of the building. A curved fully-glazed curtain wall on the north face gives an uninterrupted view of the distant hills of Ampang.

A system of louvres and balconies on the hot west façade facing the main road introduces a flow of cool air. The east and west glazing of the building are also recessed from the structure to give sun-shading. The lift lobbies, stairways and toilets have natural ventilation and lighting.

Securities Commission Building (Bukit Kiara)

Away from the city centre in the suburb of Bukit Kiara, the Securities Commission Building projects a bold confidence and a sense of strength in its shape and form. The transparency of form expresses the long term objective of the Securities Commission and the Securities Development Industry Centre of being open to the public.

Situated in a valley, the Securities Commission Building appears relatively simple in design, yet it houses almost one million square feet. The height of the low-rise building is dictated by the height limitation in the area. The relative lightness of the building façade is rather unconventional for an institutional building of this nature.



Securities Commission Building

The Securities Commission's dual role of regulating and developing the capital markets requires it to have a building that has high security and yet complete accessibility to the public for training, conferencing and obtaining information. A moat runs round the external perimeter of that part of the building below ground level, allowing natural daylight to penetrate these lower floors.

In tropical countries, buildings traditionally rely on cross-ventilation to modify the climate and to create a comfortable internal environment. As a contemporary interpretation, the Securities Commission Building sets up a double glass façade or double skin to modify the temperature between the internal and external temperature thereby reducing the cooling load of the building.

The building's environment control strategy is to save energy and running cost. The exhaust air from the office space is expelled into the double skin and rises through the thermal flue to the exterior. A series of horizontal louvres in the form of the maintenance access walkway, grills with fixed low level vertical blinds and motorised sensorised vertical screens work together to moderate direct heat and glare from the sun.

The atrium is designed to provide an internal courtyard to filter and deliver natural daylight to the office space. A pool of cool air filters in at the base of the atrium, and warm air moves up six levels to the perimeter of the atrium roof. Minimal cool air is circulated at the balcony floors running around the atrium, another energy efficient system. The transparency of the fully glazed exterior walls allows the 18-metre deep offices on the typical floor a sense of lightness throughout.

Menara Mesiniaga (Subang Jaya)

Situated in Subang Jaya close to the entrance from the Federal Highway is Menara Mesiniaga, the first building by a Malaysian architect firm (T.R. Hamzah & Yeang) to win



Menara Mesiniaga

the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1996. A 14-storey office tower (including a basement) completed in 1992, the building displays a bioclimatic approach to the design of tall buildings.

The vertical landscaping on the building façade and at the 'skycourts' is a very arresting feature of the tower. Planting mounts up from ground level on one side of the building and then 'spirals' upwards across the face of the building with the use of recessed terraces or skycourts.

A number of passive low-energy features are incorporated in this building. All window areas at the hot east and west sides of the building have external louvres as solar-shading to reduce solar heat gain into the internal areas. The north and south sides, which do not get direct solar heat, have unshielded curtain-wall glazing for good views and to maximise natural lighting.

The lift lobbies on all floors are naturally ventilated and sun-lit and enjoy outside views. As they do not require fire-protection pressurisation, they are low-energy lobbies. All stairways and toilet areas also get natural ventilation and lighting. The sunroof provides skeletal panel space for possible future placing of solar cells to provide back-up energy source.

Guthrie Pavilion (Shah Alam)

The bold and fascinating white canopy structure of the Guthrie Pavilion in Shah Alam (capital of Selangor State) ensures the building is a dominant landmark easily visible as visitors enter the locality. A three-storey building, the Guthrie Pavilion has a corporate office in one wing and a public golf clubhouse in the other wing.

The roof is an independent structure, acting as an 'umbrella' over the building, shielding it from the sun, reducing glare and air-conditioning load whilst providing a usable roof terrace. Sunshades located on the east and west faces also reduce heat gain.



Guthrie Pavilion

The canopy structure is of pre-tensioned cable and pylon steel masts supporting an inflated pillow and canopy. Its purpose is to create a physical presence and to serve as a second roof over the roof terrace, offering shading while reducing radiation (resulting in about 66 kw/hr savings in energy consumption per annum.)

The canopy structure extends to about 110m length and 51m width and the overall height of the masts is about 40m. It is formed by two air-inflated membrane cushions, which are connected at the border to a tubular steel frame. Both cushions are supported by hanger cables towards the top of three tubular steel masts and by vertical stressing cables to the ground or at some places to the building. The portion between the two cushions is covered by three conical shaped single-layer membrane structures.

Main Grandstand at Sepang F1 Circuit

Facing the straight section of the Sepang F1 Circuit, the 1266m long V-shaped Main Grandstand fronts two straight tracks with a tower at one end, thus creating a unique focal point for spectators approaching the building from the Welcome Centre. It consists of two storeys that provide accommodation for 32,400 spectators and 18 corporate boxes for 50 persons each. Both sides of the Grandstand have advantages. The northern side faces the Pit Building and the start / finish line while the southern side faces the most exciting part of the circuit.

The track is also designed in such a way that it can be divided into two shorter tracks to allow two events to be held concurrently and therefore both sides of the grandstand would function similarly. A landscaped mall links both blocks, and during an event, this mall is the setting for carnival / exhibition activities.

The 25m tower at the end of the Grandstand affords extensive views of the race track. It is supported by a central

Main Grandstand at Sepang F1 Circuit



core with spectator terraces, platform and cantilevered fabric roof. The cantilever spine beams together with the steel mast create a modern image for the Grandstand. Covering an area of 30,000 square metres, the roof is the single largest fabric roof in Asia and provides good sun protection for the east-west aligned Grandstand, so necessary as the main races are usually held in the afternoon. The roof design, with main ribs and cross ribs, is based on the ubiquitous banana leaf, which has myriad uses in Malaysia, one of which is to shield the head from sun or rain!

There are several other eye-catching contemporary structures to be viewed in the major cities and towns of

Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak. Undoubtedly, these structures lend an air of modernity and dynamism to the country, reflecting progress and development. However, visitors who appreciate heritage buildings will be pleased to know that old buildings, whether of Malay, Chinese or British design are still an integral part of Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Ipoh, Taiping, Kuching and other cities or towns. An active conservation movement ensures that old buildings of architectural or cultural merit, sometimes sitting cheek by jowl with steel and glass structures, are preserved or adapted for modern use. ■

Two other multi-storey office complexes, in the final stages of construction at press time, have generated a lot of interest due to their unique design and prominence. The architects of both structures referred to local cultures and natural elements for their designs.



Menara MATRADE

Menara MATRADE

Sheathed in 'etertile' in two tones of green, the 24-storey Menara MATRADE draws on Islamic and Malay influence for its design. The structure comprises two tower blocks linked by an arch and joined at the 16th floor, with a top section resembling the *songkok* (the Malay headgear) capping it. A four-storey podium block runs underneath the arch. Situated near the Jalan Duta government office complex in the northern part of Kuala Lumpur, this 'intelligent building' will accommodate the offices of the Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), a convention and exhibition hall and lettable office space.

Telekom Malaysia Headquarters

The bamboo shoot (*pucuk rebung*), found abundantly in Malaysia, lent inspiration to the design of the new Telekom Malaysia Headquarters, an 'intelligent building' located in the Pantai suburb of Kuala Lumpur and visible from the Federal Highway. Intersecting plates overlap to form the core, defining a sculptural form tapering towards the apex. The form of the tower is modulated by the curves of elevation and plan, suggesting a spiral while retaining a strong east-west axis to minimise solar penetration. Sky gardens alternate side to side every third floor, providing shade as well as recreational space. The 54-storey building will house Telekom Malaysia offices and showrooms, a theatre and exhibition halls.



Telekom Malaysia Headquarters

Architects : the National Library (Kumpulan Akitek), *Istana Budaya* (ADC Akitek), National Art Gallery (Akitek MAA), *Tabung Haji* Building, Securities Commission Building and Telekom Malaysia Headquarters (Hijjas Kasturi Associates), Central Plaza, Menara Mesiniaga & Guthrie Pavilion (T R Hamzah & Yeang), Main Grandstand at Sepang F1 Circuit (SAM Akitek Perunding), Menara MATRADE (Azmi Wahab, Public Works Department)

Lure of Sarawak's exotic rainforest marvels

Sarawak offers an extremely rich diversity of natural attractions. From Kuching, visitors can easily access Gunung Gading National Park to catch a rare sight of the world's largest flower and Bako National Park where Borneo jungle wildlife and a stunning coastline await.

"It is perhaps the largest and most magnificent flower in the world ...it measured across from the extremity of the petals rather more than a yard, the nectarium was nine inches wide and as deep, estimated to contain a gallon and a half of water ..." (published 1835).

So described Sir Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore, of the *Rafflesia*, the world's largest flower, which to date, has only been found in Southeast Asia. Undeniably the jewel in the botanic crown of Sarawak, tracking down the blooming *Rafflesia tuanmudae* can be an elusive affair, and gazing at this gigantic bloom often leaves the visitor awestruck. Due to its rarity and its brief flowering period, the chance to see a flowering *Rafflesia* is an excellent reason to visit Sarawak and a tremendous highlight of the trip.

A jungle parasitic plant, *Rafflesia* has no leaves or stem and does not put down roots; it grows by attaching itself to the nutrient system of a vine. The plant has no specific location or flowering season either. The *Rafflesia* bud takes an amazing nine months to mature, and then, all too briefly, blooms for only four or five days before dying.

World's biggest bloom in Gunung Gading

In Sarawak, the Gunung Gading National Park, covering an area of 4,106 hectares, is home to *Rafflesia tuanmudae*. Situated in the Lundu area, about 2 hours drive northeast of Kuching, the Gunung Gading National Park features a series of mountains, the highest being Gunung Gading (906m). Numerous waterfalls tumble down in series in the upper



reaches of the Lundu River that springs from these mountains and flows into the South China Sea.

Previously used solely as a conservation zone for the *Rafflesia tuanmudae*, Gunung Gading National Park was opened to the public in 1994 after extensive environmental impact studies. The emphasis is still on conservation, and the National Parks Department has taken measures to allow visitors to view flowering *Rafflesia* without damaging young *Rafflesia* buds and other plants.

There is a plankwalk close to where *Rafflesia* blooms are commonly found. A wire cage on the leafy jungle floor gives the first clue to a future *Rafflesia* bloom. On closer



look, a small brown Rafflesia bud inside the cage can be detected, easily mistaken for a ball of brown jungle vegetation by the non-jungle savvy visitor. The cabbage-like Rafflesia buds are fragile, and can be easily destroyed by both animals and man, hence the wire cages.

If the plant is flowering deep in the forest, the park rangers will guide visitors to the site. The search for the world's biggest flower then becomes more adventurous, and may involve crossing streams, climbing over fallen tree trunks or boulders, ascending and descending slopes. At journey's end, in the dim rainforest, shines the magnificent five-petal Rafflesia in all its orange or red glory.

The park staff usually knows when a Rafflesia is about to bloom, as park rangers look out for the plant as they traverse the park in the course of their work. Visitors can check with the Park, Tel : (60-82)-735-714, or the National Parks and Wildlife Booking Office in Kuching Tel : (60-82)-248-088 to find out if any plants are in bloom or about to bloom. Although Rafflesia flowers throughout the year, the peak flowering months are November, December and January.

Apart from Rafflesia, the serene Gunung Gading National Park abounds with numerous rare plants and tropical rainforest trees along the well-marked trails. Nametags on the trees enable the visitor to recognise and appreciate them, and make trekking up the slopes even more enjoyable and fascinating. The Viewpoint and Waterfall trails offer the shortest jungle treks. The Viewpoint trail leads to two viewpoints on the slopes of Gunung Gading. The first is about 45 minutes walk from the park headquarters and the second about 90 minutes.

The Waterfall trail winds its way up through the forest past a series of waterfalls and it takes about an hour to reach waterfall No. 7. Other treks require serious hill walking and visitors need to be fit. The Gunung Gading trek takes 3 – 4 hours one way and the Gunung Perigi some 5 hours one way, and both can be done as a day trip or with overnight camping at the summit.

Park regulations and accommodation

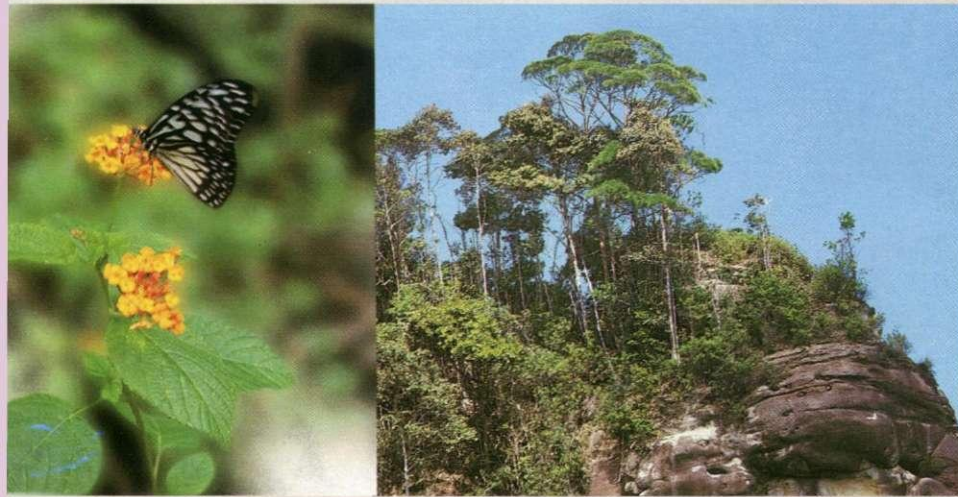
On arrival, visitors must register at the Park HQ. Park fees are RM3 (adult), RM1 (child), RM5 for camera, RM10 for video camera and guiding fees at RM5 per hour. There are two 3-bedroom chalets for up to six people at RM120, and a hostel at RM10 per person or RM40 per room. There

is no canteen at the Park HQ. Visitors can obtain food at nearby Lundu town, a 5-minute drive away, or bring their own provisions. Contact Visitors' Information Centre in Kuching Tel : (60-82)-410-944 or 410-942 Fax : (60-82)-256-301 for accommodation booking.

Bako's wildlife and stunning coastline

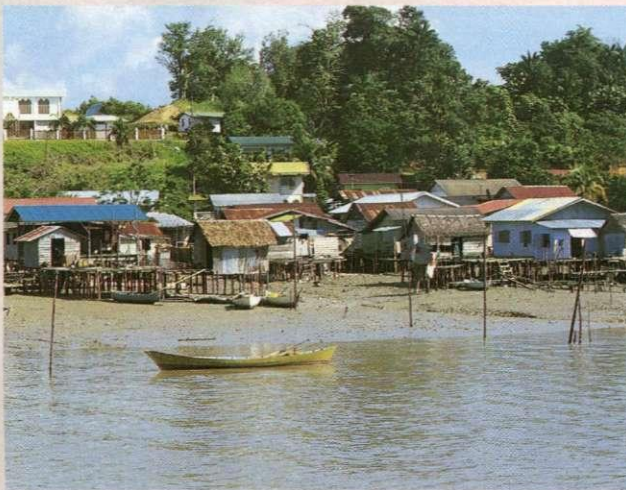
Sarawak's oldest national park established in 1957, Bako is the best place in the state for viewing a variety of wildlife and the Borneo rainforest as seven completely different tropical ecosystems can be found there. Situated on the northern tip of the Muara Tebas peninsula facing the South China Sea, Bako also features a stunning coastline with secluded coves, rugged rocky headlands, steep cliffs carved by weather and erosion over millions of years, and white sandy beaches.





The action of seaspray, waves and wind over time has gouged out magnificent sea arches and chiselled sea stacks at the base of the cliffs, with some rising above the waves like serpents' heads. On the cliff face can be seen attractive pink and iron sandstone formations.

Only 37 km from Kuching, and extending over 2,728 hectares, Bako is home to the proboscis monkey, easily



bladderwort, wild orchids and the carnivorous pitcher plant, which traps flies in its leaves and then digests them in a reservoir of corrosive fluid!

The park has a number of clearly marked trails that provide interesting leisurely walks to full-day hikes. These trails take the visitor through the lowland forest and up the hills for fantastic views of the headland, bays and beaches below. A trail leads to the Tajor Waterfalls, a popular spot for a picnic and a dip in the cool, clear waters. This trail ends with a steep descent to the beach. Teluk Assam in the park is a good place for bird watching, as over 50 types of birds have been reported residing in Bako.

Park regulations and accommodation

Park permits are needed and visitors take a boat from Kampung Bako to the Park HQ, where they register. Park fees are RM3 (adult), RM1 (child), RM5 for camera, and RM10 for video camera. The Park HQ has an information centre, a canteen and a shop.

Accommodation is available at the Lodge, where there is a choice of two-room units with two, three and five beds per room, and at the Hostel, with four beds per room, at RM42 per room. There is also a campsite. Contact Visitors' Information Centre in Kuching Tel : (60-82)-410-944 or 410-942 Fax : (60-82)-256-301 for accommodation booking.



Sarawak - A Land of National Parks

Located on the northwestern edge of Borneo Island, Sarawak is the largest state in Malaysia with two thirds of it covered in lush vegetation and intersected by rivers and tributaries. The state has set up 10 national parks and three wildlife sanctuaries to enable visitors to enjoy the natural wonders of Sarawak. Besides Gunung Gading and Bako, the other National Parks described below also offer excellent opportunities to enjoy the spectacular natural attractions of Sarawak.

Kubah National Park, 45 minutes from Kuching, offers 2,230 hectares of rolling sandstone hills, crystal clear streams, waterfalls, a rich dipterocarp forest, mangrove, palms, orchids and many species of wildlife. The Matang Wildlife Centre, next to the park, is Sarawak's main centre for wildlife and conservation and rehabilitation. Wild animals that have been rescued from captivity, particularly Orang Utans, are taught to survive in the wild and eventually released into their natural rainforest habitat. Chalet accommodation is available in Kubah and Matang.

Tanjung Datu National Park, accessible from Kuching, has Sarawak's most beautiful beaches with clean water, white sand, a rare coral shore as well as turtle nesting beaches. Mountains covered with mixed dipterocarp forest fringe the shore, cut by a series of crystal-clear rivers.

Batang Ai National Park, 250 km from Kuching, attracts with the beautiful man-made Batang Ai lake and is a sanctuary for wild Orang Utans, gibbons and hornbills. It is also home for Iban longhouse communities. Accommodation is available at the longhouse-styled Hilton Batang Ai Resort and longhouse lodges.

Similajau National Park, a short drive from Bintulu, boasts long golden beaches washed by emerald seawater, tropical rainforest, 24 species of mammals, 185 species of birds and the saltwater (estuarine) crocodile. Chalet/hostel accommodation is available.

Niah National Park, two hours from Miri or Bintulu, is an important archaeological site. The oldest homo sapiens remains in Southeast Asia dating more than 40,000 years were found in Niah's Great Cave. Visitors can see cave paintings in the Painted Cave, birds' nests collectors at work as the caves are home to millions of swiftlets that produce the edible birds' nests, bats, vibrant birds and butterflies. Chalet / hostel accommodation is available.

Lambir Hills National Park, only 30 minutes from Miri, has steep limestone ridges that provide homes to some of the richest plant and tree species found in the world. Gibbons, bearded pigs, deer and other wildlife are

found and there is a canopy viewing tower. Lodge accommodation is available.

Logan Bunut National Park, vibrant and scenic, covers 10,736 hectares and contains Sarawak's largest natural lake. The water level fluctuates and from Feb to June, visitors can walk on the dry lake bed. There is rich bird life in this wetland park and the Berawan fishermen use traditional methods to fish on the lake.

Gunung Mulu National Park, a World Heritage Site 30 minutes flying time from Miri, covers 52,866 hectares and is Sarawak's largest park. It is dominated by the spectacular peak of Gunung Mulu and the limestone formation known as the Pinnacles. It contains one of the world's largest and most impressive cave system, the largest natural chamber and the longest cave in Southeast Asia. The biodiversity is also spectacular with eight forest types, thousands of species of ferns, fungi and flowering plants, 75 species of mammals, and 262 species of birds. Chalets, hostels and a five-star hotel are available.

Information: National Parks and Wildlife Booking Office/ Sarawak Information Centre, Kuching

Tel : (60-82)-248-088

Fax : (60-82)-256-301

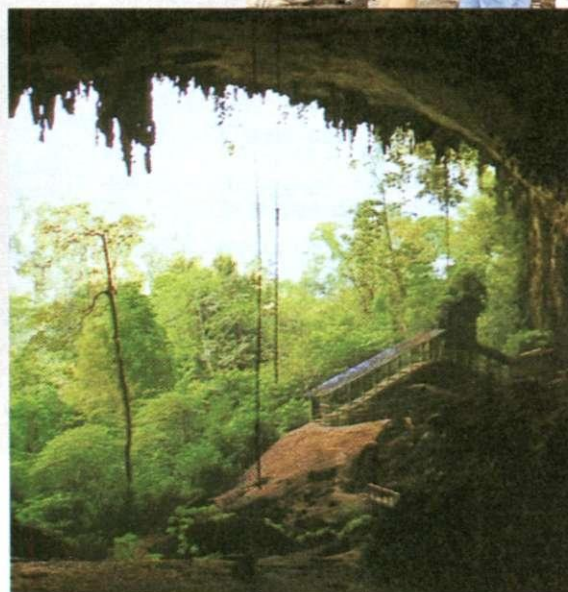
Sarawak Tourism Board

Tel : (60-82)-423-600

Fax : (60-82)-416-700

E-mail : sarawak@po.jaring.my

Website : www.sarawaktourism.com



Mega Sale Carnival 3 Mar – 1 Apr

It is a great time to shop till you drop at Malaysia's Mega Sale, with so much to buy at bargain prices and so many malls to visit! Several of the larger malls are near a number of hotels, making it even more convenient for the tourist shopper. The colourful shopping high streets, bazaars and night markets provide a different but no less exciting shopping experience.

Malls like Suria KLCC next to the Petronas Twin Towers, the world's tallest structures, Mid Valley Megamall, one of Asia's largest malls and Sunway Pyramid complete with the Sphinx have also become tourist attractions. With entertainment facilities such as cineplexes, skating rink and bowling alley in some of the malls, it is easy for the family to spend a whole day at the mall!

An extensive range of products is available in Malaysia and duty-free items include cosmetics, perfumes, leather goods and cameras. Many items

can be cheaper in Malaysia than in other countries. Remember to check out the branded items, fashion, perfumes, jewellery, ethnic crafts, collectibles, IT products and other tempting buys. A colourful carnival kicks off the Mega Sale.

Organiser: *Tourism Malaysia*

Tel: 1-300-88-0150

Fax: 03-4041-2188

Website : www.MalaysiaMegaSale.com

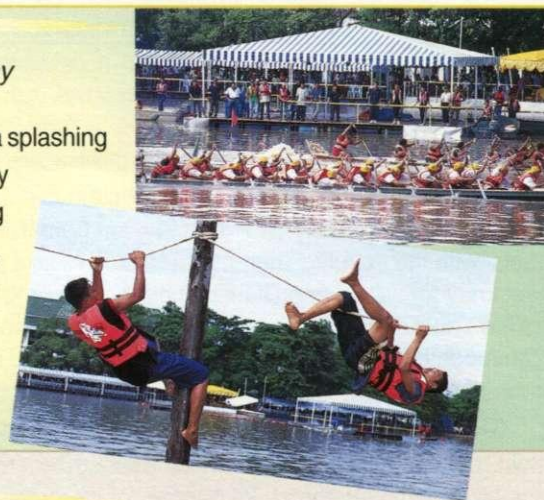


National Water Festival 14 Apr – 13 May

Nobody minds getting wet when they are having fun! It is going to be a splashing good time for all at the month-long National Water Festival. Every state in Malaysia has a coastline, the beach and rivers to stage exciting and entertaining water activities. Dragon boat races, regattas, watersports, fishing competitions and other water-based activities are being planned.

Organiser: *Ministry of Culture, Arts & Tourism*

Tel: 03-2693-7111 Fax: 03-2693-4789



Colours Of Malaysia 26 May – 24 June

The colours, sights and sounds of the diverse cultures of Malaysia go on show during the month-long Colours of Malaysia 2001! A tropical carnival of music and dance will kick off a host of entertaining cultural activities to be staged at various venues in Kuala Lumpur and other parts of the country throughout the month.

It is an exciting time to experience *Malaysia - Truly Asia* at its best! See the fascinating cultures of the Malays, Chinese, Indians, Iban, Bidayuh, Kadazan and the other ethnic groups of Sabah and Sarawak. Join in the dancing, taste the different types of food, enjoy Colours of Malaysia 2001!

Venue : *Kuala Lumpur (national level) and various states*

Organiser : *Colours of Malaysia 2001 Secretariat Tourism Malaysia,
P.O. Box 10328, 50710 Kuala Lumpur*

Tel : (603)-2696-5762 / 5756 Fax : (603)-2693-5884

E-mail : tourism@tourism.gov.my



Fascinating aboriginal wood sculptures



Among the *orang asli* or indigenous people of Peninsular Malaysia, two tribes are well known for their remarkable wood sculptures – the *Jah Hut* of the Temerloh area in central Pahang State and the *Mah Meri* of Carey Island in Selangor State. Carved by people with no formal art training, these sculptures reveal the natural craftsmanship of the *orang asli* carvers, and their innate understanding of wood. Astoundingly, each aboriginal wood sculpture is carved from a single piece of wood, without nails and interlocks, with some sculptures reaching up to 1.5 metres.

The *Jah Hut* and the *Mah Meri* carvers often draw on their ancient culture and folklore for the subject of the wood sculpture. In *orang asli* culture, earthly and heavenly phenomena are explained through 'spirits' or *moyang*. There are spirits for birth, death, illness, parenthood, humour, mischief, deceit, love and other emotional concepts.

Both the *Jah Hut* and the *Mah Meri* tribes carve elaborate figures depicting forest and household spirits, purely as art pieces and not for worship. Although some of these sculptures may appear



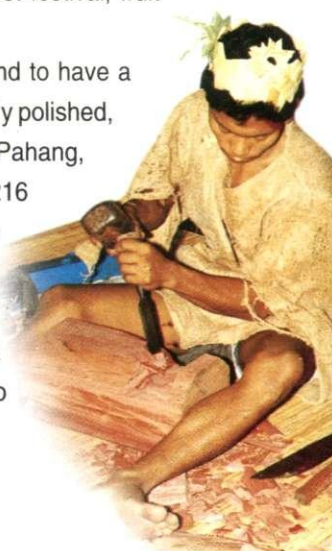
scary, the proportion, balance and beauty

of these works of aboriginal art shine through. The *Jah Hut* also carves animals like the tiger, elephant, crocodile, leopard and monkey, and totems using hardwood from the surrounding jungle.

In his boat, the *Mah Meri* wood carver travels to the mangrove forests on Carey Island to look for *nyrih batu*, a hardwood for his wood sculptures. Being former sea-gypsies, the *Mah Meri* carvers focus on sea-gods, dragons, crabs, nightbirds and fish. They also carve ritual masks which they believe depict their ancestors, both in features and in spirit.

These masks are worn in dances to celebrate the harvest festival, fruit season and weddings, as well as in healing ceremonies.

A selection of *Jah Hut* wood sculptures, which tend to have a rough finish and those from the *Mah Meri*, which are highly polished, are on display at the *Orang Asli* Museum, 24km Jalan Pahang, Gombak, Kuala Lumpur Tel : (60-3)-6189-2122 ext. 216 (to Museum). Display is subject to change. Some pieces are available at selected shops in Kuala Lumpur Craft Complex (Jalan Conlay), open daily from 8:45am – 6pm and Pucuk Rebung, Level 3, Ampang Mall, Suria KLCC, Kuala Lumpur. *Mah Meri* wood sculptures can also be bought direct from the carvers on Carey Island.



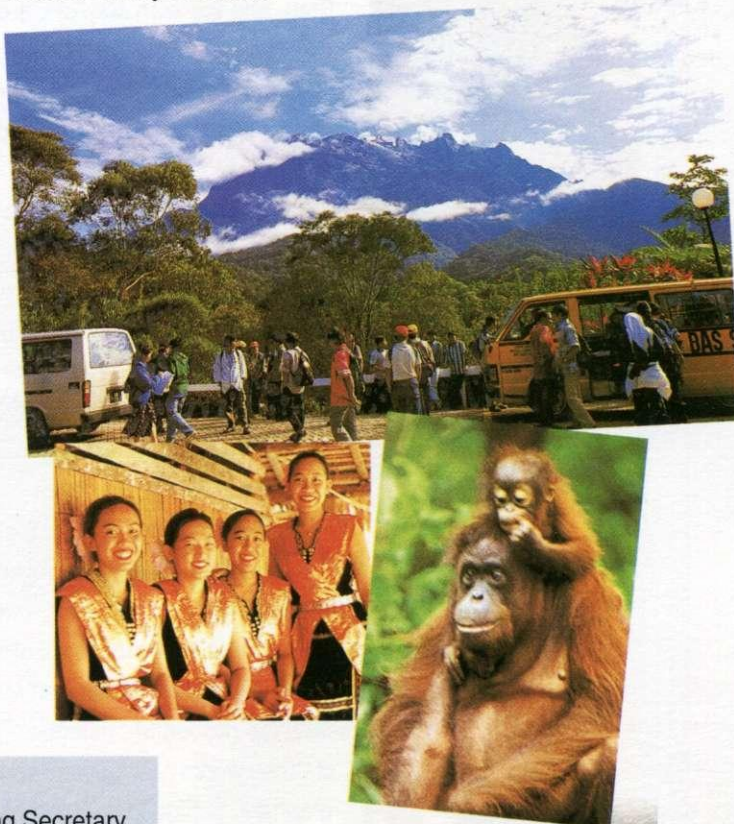
Highest mountain race *Mt Kinabalu International Climbathon : 6-7 Oct 2001*

Climbers normally take two days to reach the peak of Mount Kinabalu (4,095m) in Sabah State. But champions of the Mount Kinabalu International Climbathon race through that distance in an amazing three hours plus only!

Covering a distance of 21 km to and fro, the climbathon starts from an altitude of 1,800 metres and ascends to a staggering height of 4,000 metres. Mount Kinabalu is Southeast Asia's highest mountain. The total prize money is a tantalising USD 26,000 and all climbers will be rewarded with the fun and exhilaration of surviving the highest mountain race in the world, plus the wondrous beauty of Kinabalu National Park, a World Heritage Site.

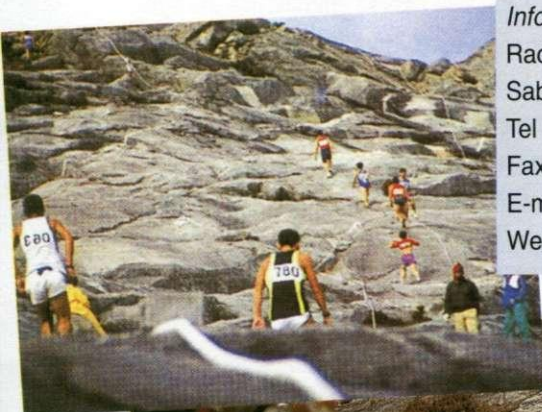
With over 1,200 species of orchids together with the curious pitcher plant and plants from all over the world, the 75,370-hectare Kinabalu National Park is also a favourite with nature lovers. Other places of interest in Sabah are Kota Kinabalu, the capital city and the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park facing it, Poring Hot Springs, which lies within the Kinabalu National Park, and Sepilok Orang Utan Sanctuary. Diving and white water rafting are popular adventure activities in Sabah, which has some of the world's best diving sites.

Come, take up the mental and physical challenge of the Mount Kinabalu International Climbathon and enjoy the natural beauty of Sabah.



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Sabah Tourism Promotion Corporation
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Fax : (6088)-212-075 / 219-311
E-mail : sabah@po.jaring.my
Website : www.sabahtourism.com/



PERAK *to develop heritage and nature tourism*



The Perak State Government will be developing heritage and nature tourism to capitalise on the rich historical and cultural heritage of the State, as well as its natural beauty, said The Right Honourable Chief Minister of Perak, YAB Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli bin Ghazali.

Speaking at the re-launch of Pasir Salak Riverine Resort, now under the management of Perak Riverine Sdn Bhd, a Yayasan Perak subsidiary, Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli said that Perak's natural beauty included hills, caves, waterfalls, rivers, flora, fauna and tropical rainforest.

"For example, the unique beauty of *Gua Tempurung*, which is being developed by another Yayasan Perak subsidiary, has even prompted the Prime Minister to describe the cave as Perak's best kept secret," he revealed.

According to Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli, Perak's tourism industry had expanded rapidly in the last 10 years through the joint efforts of the State Government and the public. *Visit Perak Year 2000*, he pointed out, was a major step in projecting the state as a competitive and popular destination locally and internationally.

"The tourism industry will become a catalyst for raising economic achievements," said Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli, "and the State Government has allocated RM11.3 million for tourism development and promotion in 2001."



"Projects and programmes planned for this year will give added value to existing tourism products and increase their attraction value and competitive edge to international standards."

On Pasir Salak, situated 70 km south of the state capital city of Ipoh, and well-known as the birth place of Malaysian opposition to British rule leading to democracy, Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli said, "Pasir Salak offers the visitor history, culture, arts and tourism."

"Historical events are important assets in the tourism industry. The assassination of J.W.W. Birch, the first British Resident, in Pasir Salak on 2 Nov 1875, and the outbreak of the Perak War produced famous historical Malaysian figures



such as Sultan Abdullah, Dato Maharaja Lela, Dato' Sagor, Pandak Endut, Ngah Jabor and Si Putum," noted Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli. He added that the development of Pasir Salak would stretch over a long period to enable it to become a major tourist destination.

Attractions in the Pasir Salak Historical Complex, built in 1990, include the J.W.W. Birch Monument, Malay Warriors Monument, Kutai House – the traditional Perak Malay house, and Perak Chief Ministers Gallery. In 2000, the Pasir Salak Historical Complex recorded 81,043 visitors, of which, more than 2000 came from all parts of the world, including the UK, Europe, Australia, USA, the Asean countries, Japan and Taiwan.

Situated by the Perak River among existing Malay villages and near the Pasir Salak Historical Complex, the 8.2 acre Pasir Salak Riverine Resort consists of 13 one-storey chalets and six two-storey chalets with a total of 100 rooms. The air-conditioned rooms are equipped with IDD telephone, colour TV, fridge and tea / coffee-making facility.

Completed in March 1999 at a cost of RM15 million, the resort offers a riverside amphitheatre that can accommodate up to 500 persons, a restaurant, a hall and meeting rooms, boathouse and jetty. Recreational activities include a swimming pool, a



racetrack nearby for kart prix, motorcub and cycling, river cruise, jet ski, boating, canoeing, fishing and birdwatching. The resort currently employs 35 staff, mostly local residents.

The resort is being marketed to the government, corporate sectors, travel agents and individual travellers, and will be promoted overseas at Perak State tourism promotion tours to Australia, India, Indonesia and Singapore in 2001.

Dato' Seri DiRaja Tajol Rosli also proposed that federal and state government departments consider giving staff who win the Outstanding Service Award a paid holiday at Pasir Salak Riverine Resort as an incentive.





“*While Perak may be a late starter, the results achieved in 2000 and the larger tourism budget clearly indicate that we are a serious player in the tourism industry.***”**
We want to make Perak a household name.....



Perak tourist arrivals exceed target

Perak State attracted an estimated 2.5 million visitors in 2000, exceeding the set target by 25%. The Honourable Dato' Mazidah Zakaria, State Executive Councillor for Tourism enthuses, “2000 was Visit Perak Year, and we had set a target of 2 million visitors. Based on hotel occupancy reports carried out by Tourism Malaysia, we had achieved the target as early as September last year. This is an increase of some 44% compared to the same period in 1999.”

Adds Dato' Mazidah, “Significantly, although Visit Perak Year was very much targeted at the domestic market, there was an increase of some 67.7% in foreign tourist arrivals as well.”

Dato' Mazidah attributes the success of Visit Perak Year 2000 to the state's strong commitment to tourism and its promotion efforts, its presence at travel trade and consumer shows and the well-organised, high quality events staged by the State Government and private event organisers.

Perak started marketing Visit Perak Year 2000 in late 1999 and until October 2000, had participated in nine travel trade shows including WTM in London, sales missions to the UK, Holland, China and shows in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Medan and Haadyai. The state also organised fam trips for the local media, travel agents from



Penang, Thailand and Singapore, Scandinavian MICE agents and the Malacca Tourist Guide Council.

On tourism events staged last year, Dato' Mazidah recalls, “There were more than 60 events in 2000, the most ever organised in a single year, and many of them attracted larger turnouts compared to previous years.

“For example, the inaugural Colours of Perak Cultural Parade attracted about 2,000 participants and some 10,000 spectators. Other events such as the Perak River Safari in Kuala Kangsar, Perak Fest at Suria KLCC in Kuala Lumpur, Pulau Sembilan Fishing Safari, the Ipoh Run, Perak Hotel Food Carnival and International Rainforest Challenge were also very successful.”

Perak also marketed itself at consumer travel shows in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Singapore besides launching an advertising campaign in the local print and electronic media.

Describing 2000 as a very hectic year, Dato' Mazidah says, “It was our first Visit Perak Year and despite being handicapped in many areas including manpower and tourism promotion track record, with the support of certain members of the travel industry, we managed to surpass our targets.”





More aggressive marketing as Perak taps region

Bigger budget for tourism development

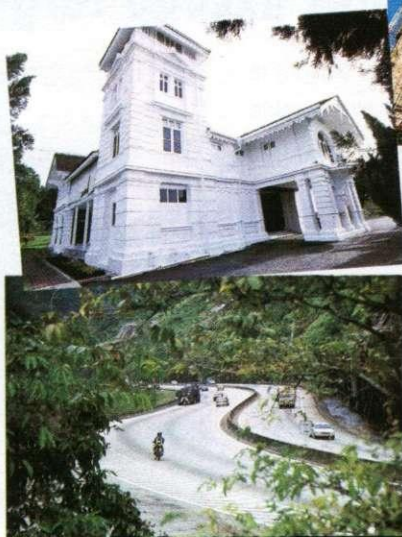
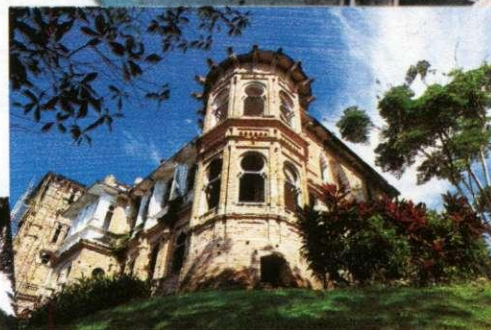
Perak State has increased its tourism budget by almost three-fold for 2001 and will be marketing more aggressively in regional markets, while continuing to tap the domestic and existing markets.

"For 2001, Perak has allocated RM11.3 million for tourism development, infrastructure and promotion, the biggest so far, compared to RM4.9 million in 2000," says The Honourable Dato' Mazidah Zakaria, State Executive Councillor for Tourism. "The state is also making a bid for RM120 million under the Federal Government's 8th Malaysia Plan for the development of new tourism products and tourist facilities, and for upgrading existing products."

"Building on the success of Visit Perak Year 2000, we will be promoting Perak in new markets like China, India, Australia and Indonesia besides increasing our presence in Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand," says Dato' Mazidah.

"Based on the Perak Tourism Master Plan prepared in 1998, we are actually ahead of schedule in moving into the regional markets," she says. "However, we are very encouraged by the tremendous increase in tourist arrivals recorded in 2000, and are highly enthusiastic about the myriad tourism attractions that Perak can offer."

Calling on the travel trade and tourism-related private sector organisations to give more support, Dato' Mazidah says, "While Perak may be a late starter, the results achieved in 2000 and the larger tourism budget clearly indicate that we are a serious player in the tourism industry. We want to make Perak a household name and will be looking at all areas that need beefing up in order to achieve our targets."



"Perak is a large state endowed with numerous tourist attractions, including islands, beaches, virgin tropical rainforest and rich, historical sites. Being under-exposed, these attractions can be packaged as new products for visitors," points out Dato' Mazidah. "MICE planners would also be able to find new and exciting aspects in Perak to make their events more memorable."

As part of the state's more aggressive marketing strategy, Perak is working closely with Penang, its northern neighbour, to draw more tourists. "Perak has attractions not found in Penang. By including Perak in the itinerary, or making Perak the extension while Penang is the gateway, visitors to the island can enjoy more diverse attractions and activities," notes Dato' Mazidah. "With the North South Expressway, it is only a short ride to Perak's attractions whether from Penang or Kuala Lumpur."

Dato' Mazidah is also keen to promote medical and education-related tourism. "There are specialist hospitals in Ipoh, a salubrious city with serene surroundings, that probably have much shorter waiting lists. There are also good colleges, including the Perak Medical College which is associated with Britain's Sheffield University. Notably, costs are generally lower in Perak and that should be a conducive factor for those seeking overseas medical attention or education," she says.



Ipoh girls so pretty, and more!

For years, Ipoh, the capital of Perak State, has enjoyed the reputation of producing the fairest maidens in the land. It is also the hometown of Michelle Yeoh, Malaysia's James Bond girl who starred with Pierce Brosnan in the 1997 film 'Tomorrow Never Dies', and in another highly acclaimed film, 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon'.

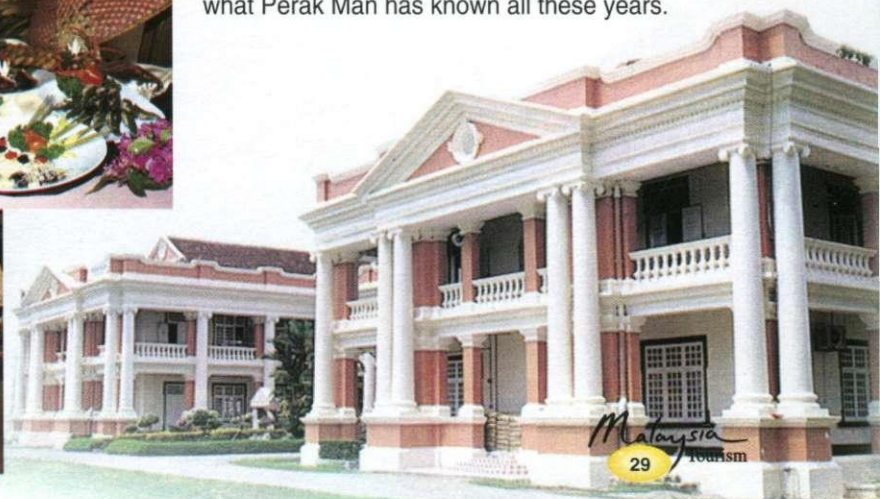
Some attribute this enviable reputation to the excellent water and fabulous food available in Ipoh – dubbed Food City – and indeed, all over Perak. Not surprising, as Perak grows a huge assortment of fruits and vegetables, and seafood is plentiful. Perhaps it is the beautiful scenery, with emerald hills and verdant valleys, not duplicated elsewhere in the country. Visitors attest that the air is cleaner and more refreshing in Perak and travellers on the North South Expressway will observe that the most attractive stretch lies in Perak State.

Perak also offers beautiful tropical islands, such as Pangkor, warm, sandy beaches and a hill resort. The large Belum Valley in the north is virgin tropical rainforest which will be sensitively developed as an eco-tourism spot. The state is also full of fascinating historical sites. For example, Taiping heritage town, developed by the British in 1874, boasts 31 firsts in the country, and continues to attract British, Australian and New Zealand visitors who had been based in the town previously.

Hollywood production 'Anna and the King' starring Jodie Foster and Chow Yun Fatt and other films were partly shot in Perak, as the state has an abundance of heritage buildings and excellent scenic spots.

New tourist attractions are being developed, such as a memorial at Pangkor Island's Dutch Fort and the Perak River Cruise at Kuala Kangsar, the royal town. The Tin Mine Village, which will recall the heyday of the tin mining industry in Perak's Kinta Valley, formerly the world's largest tin producing region, and a nature park will be set up in Batu Gajah, near Ipoh.

Perak, which means 'silver' in the Malay language, is a land of timeless beauty and ageless charm. If the 'Perak Man', whose skeletal remains were unearthed in the state and dated at 10,000 years, could be called to testify, surely he would agree! Come to Perak and enjoy what Perak Man has known all these years.



International Kite Festival

in Pasir Gudang, Johor



Over 500 brilliant and fascinating kites in varied shapes, sizes and colours took to the tropical sky at the Pasir Gudang 6th International Kite Festival 2001 in Johor State from 3 – 11 February. Amazing modern creative kites vied for attention with charming traditional kites from Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam as well as the dragon and phoenix kites from China.

In the international category, there were 81 contestants from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, France, Germany, Holland, USA, England, China, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines and Vietnam. Malaysia fielded over 400 contestants under the individual, team, corporate organisation, school, college/university and club categories.

Kite enthusiasts, whether contestant or spectator, enjoyed a thrilling display of awesome kites such as the 'Megaray' – the largest kite in the world designed by New Zealander Phillip McConnice. It measures 600 sq. metre, weighs 250



kg and has a pull of 22,000 tons. Stunt kites from Australia, that give off a jet sound when flying, were exhibited by Ocean Breeze. Local kites included the largest 'Ketupat' measuring 100 sq. metre with a pull of 10,000 tons, the largest 'Kuda Kepang', the 30 m x 5 m 'Dugong', the 'Jengking', the largest 'Wau Merak' as well stunt kites.

Besides kite flying, there were cultural shows and workshops. The Pasir Gudang International Kite Festival is one of the major tourism events in Johor organised by the Pasir Gudang Local Authority.

For further information, contact
Johor Tourism Information Centre
Tel: (60-7)-223-4935 Fax: (60-7)-223-7554
E-mail: tourjoho@tm.net.my



Largest kite in Malaysia

Malaysia's biggest 'Wau Merak', measuring 64 feet in width and height, and weighing 226.24 kg, was launched by DYMM Baginda Tuanku Sultan Johor at the Pasir Gudang 6th International Kite Festival 2001.

'Wau Merak' is the kite of the Bugis community and also the traditional kite of Johor State,. It has become the identity of the Johor Kite Association, which made the record-breaking kite. Costing RM11,000 and completed in 64 days, the kite was constructed from traditional materials such as bamboo, tyvex and colour paper, rattan and satin, from a design based on the black pepper flower.

The special feature of the 'Wau Merak' is that it has seven points that can emit sound, as the kite was originally flown at night.

Jungle birds, sun-kissed islands & city lights

The southern gateway city of Johor Bahru is one of the most well-known and visited cities in Malaysia. Regular visitors 'drop in' for the fabulous food, the extensive range of shopping, entertainment and handicrafts. The landmarks of this waterfront city are unique, such as the Royal Abu Bakar Museum and the Sultan Abu Bakar Mosque, and the orchid farm ablaze with colour never fails to thrill every visitor.

But a lot more attractions in the state wait to be discovered. Come and experience the ancient tropical rainforest in the Endau Rompin National Park and discover the wonders of untouched nature. This last remaining tract of pristine forest lying at the southernmost tip of mainland Asia boasts a fascinating landscape of cliffs, waterfalls, rapids and boulder pools, carved by the water of several rivers over millions of years. It also houses many new plants and animal species unknown to science, as well as many different and unique ecological habitats. Here, you can hear every note of the jungle bird's song.

Off the east coast of Johor is a marine park with more than 16 sun-kissed islands and terrific spots for diving and snorkelling. There is a range of accommodation from modern resorts with swimming pool to basic wooden chalets with hammocks between coconut trees. Lying on the beach, soaking in the sun is a popular activity on the islands as well



as on the beaches at Mersing and Desaru.

Golf enthusiasts have a choice of more than 28 golf courses, many of which present a visual treat as well as a golfing challenge. For those who love mountain sport such as mountain biking and rockface climbing, Gunung Ledang (Mount Ophir) in northern Johor is the ideal choice. Visitors can also visit a pineapple farm, an oil palm or rubber estate, and arrange a

homestay at a farm.

For more information on Johor's attractions, contact Johor Tourism Information Centre Tel: (60-7)-223-4935 Fax: (60-7)-223-7554 E-mail: tourjoho@tm.net.my

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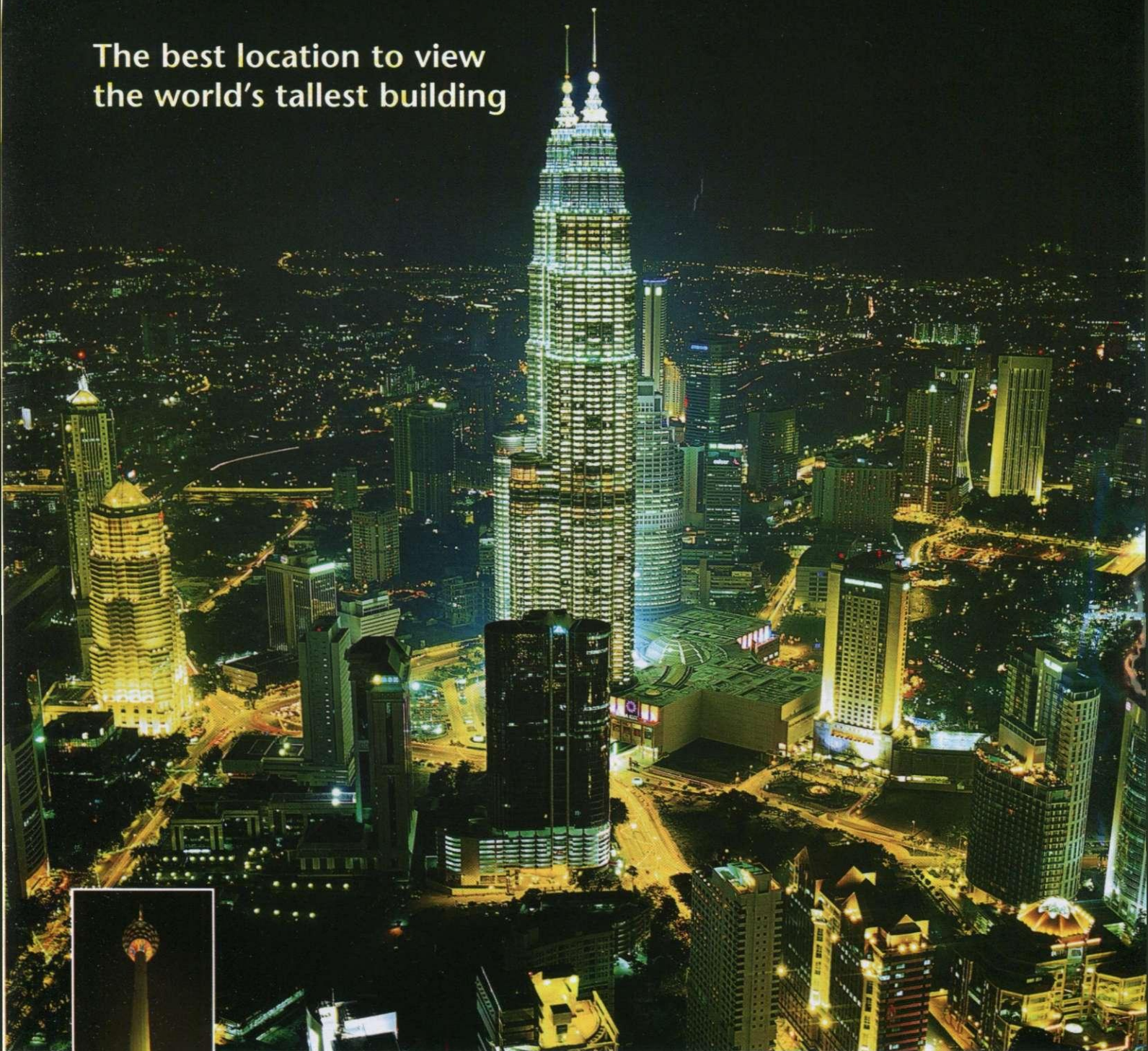
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